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CAMPAIGN & NEW LAWS AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Rann Government is launching a multi-pronged approach to tackling domestic violence with today's introduction of new laws designed to reduce assaults and increase protection complemented by an \$868,000 anti-violence education campaign.

The *Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Bill 2009* introduced to Parliament today gives police greater powers to take immediate action when individuals and their families are threatened with violence.

"This is a big departure from the past when women have often had to wait until they have been assaulted on more than one occasion before a court could order their partner to stay away from the family home," says Mr Atkinson.

"Helping victims stay in their own homes, rather than fleeing is a key objective. In addition to greater police powers that will help all victims, we will be making it easier for victims of abuse who live in rented accommodation to choose to stay.

"The Bill will also allow intervention to protect children from witnessing or being exposed to abuse in their homes. This is especially important if we want to break the cycle of abuse that can so tragically occur in some families.

"We also want to considerably increase the number of people who can be protected by these laws including those experiencing direct physical violence as well as those subjected to economic or psychological abuse.

"This Government doesn't tolerate controlling behaviour in relationships in any form," says Mr Atkinson.

Minister for the Status of Women Gail Gago says "The Government's strategy to reduce domestic abuse zeros in on behavioural change. Individuals who abuse others can be made to attend programs where they will learn to deal with underlying issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, problem gambling and anger management."

"Our Government is tackling domestic abuse on three fronts. We want to support victims as far as is practically possible; protect as many people as we can from experiencing abuse and change the behaviour of those who are being abusive," says Ms Gago.

The Government's law reforms are further backed by today's launch of an \$868,000 four-year public awareness campaign and education strategy.

The *Don't Cross the Line* campaign kicks off tomorrow, aiming to transform attitudes toward relationship abuse by encouraging people to re-evaluate what is acceptable behavior.

“This confronting campaign will promote discussion about what is acceptable behaviour, while highlighting what perpetrators are putting on the line.

“It also encourages those who are suffering relationship abuse or questioning their actions to visit the website to find out where they can go for help,” says Ms Gago.

“In the same way that we strengthened and expanded rape and sexual assault laws earlier in the year to offer greater protection to more people, we want to see domestic abuse laws improve for everyone who may be touched by this damaging behaviour,” says Mr Atkinson.

More information about domestic violence, including helpline telephone numbers can be found at www.dontcrosstheline.com.au